

Open House at state's new Martin County Facility

Transportation officials represent Governor at event to mark Martin County road projects



A ribbon was cut and the ground symbolically broken in Martin County on Tuesday, December 7, 2005, as state and local officials gathered at the new Martin County Maintenance facility on KY 645 north of Inez.

State Highway Commissioner Marc Williams was on hand to dedicate the new maintenance garage and break ground for two important road projects: reconstruction of KY 40 at Buck Creek Hill (Beauty) and construction of the new KY 40/KY 645 interchange in Inez.

"It's an honor to be here, to be part of celebrating the fact that we are moving forward in Martin County," Williams said. Rep. Hubert Collins and State Senator Ray Jones II echoed his sentiments. "What we celebrate here today are things that make a positive difference in people's lives," Collins said. "These road projects and the facility that helps the state road crew do a better job will benefit every single person in Martin County."

Jones said that the Inez to Warfield Road, when completed, will connect Martin County with the Tolsia Highway in Southern West Virginia. "This is just one more important infrastructure project that will enhance economic development and the quality of life here in Martin County," he commented.

The maintenance facility, home to a 15-man crew which takes care of almost 140 miles of state roads and bridges in Martin County, was built at a total cost of \$662,170. This includes the main garage building and offices, a detached seasonal building used for storage and to park heavy equipment, a salt dome, and installation of

utilities on the state-owned property. Jerry Todd is the garage superintendent, John Cassell is his assistant, and Jerry Oaks is the crew's timekeeper. Crew members include Jay Hall, Benny McGinnis, Calvin Howard, Barry Ward, Garry Patrick, Danny Slone, Jason Spence, Ernest Hall, Sammy Sumpter, Junior Hunt, Dewey Jude, and Levi Lowe.

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Students participate in Martin County groundbreaking

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The Buck Creek Hill reconstruction, in the state's Six-Year Plan since 2000, is a state-funded safety improvement project. The project will ease, or soften, the S-shaped curve at the north end of Beauty, the worst location along KY 40 for vehicular incidents, particularly large trucks turning over. The contract for \$1,815,325.14 was awarded to Bizzack on October 27, 2005. Work that affects the driving public is expected to start in March or April of 2006. The contractor has 124 working days after its start date to complete the work without penalty.

The KY 40/KY 645 interchange, near Sheldon Clark High School, is part of a long-term, state-funded reconstruction of the Inez to Warfield Road (KY 40). The contract for \$8,314,456.07 was awarded to Elmo Greer & Sons of London, Kentucky, which has 230 working days after the start date to complete the work. The start date for this project will also probably be March or April 2006.

Highway District 12's Chief District Engineer Danl Hall emceed the event. Jason Spence, pastor of Gospel Light Free Will Baptist Church and a member of District 12's Martin County Maintenance Crew, gave the invocation. Students from Inez Elementary led the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of the program. The Sheldon Clark High School Band, under the direction of Michelle Harless, presented the *Star Spangled Banner* and *My Old Kentucky Home*. A reception followed in the break room at the maintenance facility, complete with homemade bread pudding from Miss Ida's Tea Room in Inez.

